

Claims 1, 3-8, 11, 15-18, 22-25, 29-31, and 35-37 are currently pending. Claim 2, 9-10, 12-14, 19-21, 26-28, and 32-34 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 3, 11, 15-16, 18, 22-23, 25, 29, 31 and 35-36 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced into any of the amended claims.

The Examiner has objected to the drawings for the reason set forth in item No. 1 on page 2 of the Official Action, and not herein repeated. Applicants have amended the Specification at page 10, lines 17-21, and thereby believe that the Examiner's grounds for objecting to the drawings are now moot.

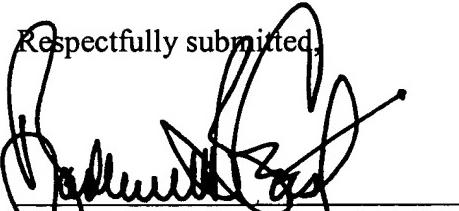
The Examiner has "objected" to claims 3, 9, 12, 14, 19, 26, and 32 as set forth respectively in items 2-5 on pages 2-3 of the Official Action and not herein repeated. Applicants note that claims 9, 12, 14, 19, and 32 have been cancelled. Claims 3 and 26 have been amended to specifically correct the language objected to. Accordingly, the objections to pending claims 3 and 26 are now believed to be moot.

On the merits, the Examiner has rejected to claims 1, 9, 12, 11-13, 18-20, 25-27, and 31-33 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for the reasons discussed, respectively, at items 6,7 and 8 on pages 3-14 of the Official Action, and not herein repeated. Applicants note that of the currently rejected claims, claims 1, 11, 18, 25 and 31 (*inter alia*) have been amended. Further, Applicants note the conditional allowance of claims 2-8, 14-17, 21-24, 28-30, and 34-37.

In view of the amendment of independent claims 1, 11, 18, 25 and 31, wherein limitations from allowed claims 2, 14, 21, 28 and 324 have been incorporated, Applicants respectively request reconsideration of all pending claims, which are now believed to be in

condition for allowance. In the unlikely event that the Examiner is of the opinion that any of the pending claims remain unpatentable over the currently cited references, Applicants respectfully traverse said grounds of objection.

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Respectfully submitted,


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